



AIKEN COUNTY

Planning & Development Department

February 16, 2009

Attn: Mr. Nelson Roberts, Manager, Air Planning Section, SCDHEC - BAQ
S.C. DHEC
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Subject: Comments for a New Air Quality Monitor / Air Shed Boundary for Aiken County

Dear Mr. Roberts.

As the ARTS MPO (Augusta Regional Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization) for the South Carolina side, Aiken County Planning & Development Department is writing to inform SC-DHEC of our desire to establish an air shed boundary for Aiken County smaller than that of the Augusta-Richmond County MSA (Metropolitan Statistical Area). Our reason/justification is explained later in this letter.

First, as you are aware, on March 12, 2008, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) strengthened its national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) for ground-level ozone. Based on data from 2005-2007, Aiken was one of seven counties in South Carolina which had at least one monitor with concentrations of ozone above the revised standards.

We understand that the EPA sets its non-attainment boundaries based on recommendations from the states and that states must make their recommendations to the EPA no later than March 12, 2009 for areas to be designated as *attainment*, *nonattainment*, and *unclassifiable* under the revised standard.

Therefore, the ARTS MPO respectfully asks you to recommend to the EPA the use of the existing ARTS MPO boundary on the South Carolina side as a first choice. Should there be a need to have two air quality monitors in a region, we would suggest installing a second air quality monitor between Edgefield and Jackson. Our suggested boundary excludes the Jackson monitor. We recommend this choice because the monitor in Jackson purportedly registers poor air quality measurements due to wind blown emissions from the industries located south of Augusta, Georgia. There is not much we can do in Aiken that would rectify those industries.

Furthermore, you mentioned in an email dated January 23, 2009, that the official public comment period ended January 7, 2009, but you would still accept any additional comments up to the time you finalize your recommendations to EPA on March 12, 2009. Also, we understand that EPA will make its final designations by March 12, 2010, and data from a new site would have to cover three years to be valid. However, we would still like you to consider recommending our comments to EPA.




AIKEN COUNTY

Planning & Development Department

Thank you for your consideration on this very important matter. If you have any questions, please contact Gerald K. Jefferson at (803) 642-1520 or at gjefferson@aikencountysc.gov.

Respectfully yours,


Stephen Strohming, Planning Director
Gerald K. Jefferson, Transportation Planner

cc: Mark Sanford, Governor of South Carolina
Brian Barnes, Air Planning Section, SCDHEC – BAQ
Ron Cross, Chairman, ARTS MPO
Fred Cavanaugh, Chairman, ARTS MPO-SC side / Mayor of Aiken
Ronnie Young, Chairman, Aiken County Council
C.H. Williams, Mayor of Burnetown
Lark Jones, Mayor of North Augusta
Paul DeCamp, Planning Director, ARCPC
Sandra Korbelik, Transportation Planner, City of Aiken
Skip Grkovic, Director of Economic & Community Development, City of North Augusta
Ron Patton, Planning & Environmental, SCDOT
Michael Dennis, Area Planning Engineer, SCDOT